

Weiser River Watershed Subbasin Assessment and Total Maximum Daily Loads



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Department of Environmental Quality

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgments i

Table of Contents..... iii

List of Tables..... vi

List of Figures xiii

Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols xvii

Executive Summary..... xix

Subbasin at a Glance xx

Key Findings xxv

 Weiser River, Galloway Dam to Snake River.....xxv

 Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam xxvi

 Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River..... xxviii

 Mann Creek, Mann Creek Reservoir to Weiser River xxviii

 Cove Creek, Headwaters to Weiser River xxix

 Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River xxx

 Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River..... xxxi

 Johnson Creek, Headwaters to Weiser River xxxii

 West Fork Weiser River, Headwaters to Weiser River xxxii

 North Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir xxxiii

 South Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir xxxiii

 Crane Creek Reservoir xxxiv

Proposed Listing on Next Idaho §303(d) list xxxiv

Timeframe for Meeting Water Quality Standards..... xxxvi

Implementation Strategy..... xxxvi

Identified Data Gaps xxxvii

Public Involvement xxxvii

1.0 Subbasin Assessment – Watershed Characterization 1

1.1 Introduction..... 1

 Background..... 1

 Idaho’s Role..... 2

1.2 Physical and Biological Characteristics 4

 Subbasin Characteristics 9

1.3 Cultural Characteristics 40

 Land Use 40

 Land Ownership, Cultural Features, and Population 43

2.0 Subbasin Assessment – Water Quality Concerns and Status	46
2.1 Introduction	46
Background.....	46
Idaho’s Role.....	47
2.2 Water Quality Limited Segments Occurring in the Subbasin	48
2.3 Applicable Water Quality Standards	51
Beneficial Uses.....	51
Beneficial Use Support Status	53
2.4 Target Analysis	58
Numeric Criteria.....	58
Temperature	61
Narrative Criteria.....	62
Allocations	73
Design and Approach of the Subbasin Assessment.....	74
2.5 Water Quality Status of Listed Segments.....	76
Weiser River, Galloway Dam to Snake River.....	76
Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam	99
Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.....	118
Mann Creek, Mann Creek Reservoir to Weiser River	127
Cove Creek, Headwaters to Weiser River	133
Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River	137
Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.....	148
Johnson Creek, Headwaters to Weiser River	158
West Fork Weiser River, Headwaters to Weiser River	161
North Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir	164
South Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir	169
Crane Creek Reservoir	173
2.6 Conclusions	175
2.7 Data Gaps	178
3. Subbasin Assessment – Pollutant Source Inventory and Allocations	
Analysis	182
3.1 Sources of Pollutants of Concern.....	182
Point Sources	182
Nonpoint Sources	182
Pollutant Transport	188
3.2 Total Phosphorus Allocations.....	188
Point Sources	188
4. Subbasin Assessment – Summary of Past and Present Pollution Control Efforts	215
5. Total Maximum Daily Loads.....	216
5.1 Instream Water Quality Targets.....	217
Design Conditions.....	217
Target Selection.....	217

Monitoring Points	219
5.2 Load Capacity	220
5.3 Estimates of Existing Pollutant Loads.....	223
5.4 Load Allocation.....	224
Margin of Safety.....	224
Background.....	226
Waste Load Allocations	226
Load Allocations	227
Reserve	228
Seasonal Variation.....	228
Reasonable Assurance.....	228
Construction Storm Water and TMDL Waste Load Allocations.....	229
Remaining Available Load	230
5.5 Implementation Strategies	233
Time Frame	233
Approach	234
Responsible Parties.....	236
Monitoring Strategy.....	238
5.6 Conclusions	240
References Cited.....	246
Glossary	254
Technical Appendices	275
Appendix A. Unit Conversion Chart	276
Appendix B. Methods for Bioassessment (Rivers).....	277
Appendix C. Data Sources and Data.....	295
Appendix D. Additional Data from the Weiser Watershed Advisory Group .	357
Appendix E. Distribution List.....	359
Appendix F. Public Comments	363
Appendix G. §303 (d) List Crosswalk.....	375

List of Tables

Table A. Idaho 1998 §303(d) Listed Segments. Weiser River Watershed.	xxiii
Table B. Summary of Assessment Outcomes. Weiser River Watershed.....	xxiv
Table C. §303(d) Delisting and Additional Listing Recommendations and Overview. Weiser River Watershed.....	xxxv
Table 1. Climatic Summary. Available Weather Information (Western Regional Climatic Center 2003). Weiser River Watershed.	7
Table 2. Dams, Year Constructed, Water Body, Ownership, Owner, and Size. Weiser River Watershed.....	13
Table 3. Soil Unit Characteristics. Weiser River Watershed.	21
Table 4. IDFG Fish Survey Results. Weiser River Watershed.....	30
Table 5. IDFG Fish Data from Small Tributaries: 1995, 1999, and 2001. Weiser River Watershed.	31
Table 6. Fifth Field Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUCs), Total Acres, and § 303(d) Listed Segments. Weiser River Watershed.	34
Table 7. Fifth Field HUCs, General Land Use/Landform, Elevation Change, and Hydrologic Regimes. Weiser River Watershed.	36
Table 8. Fifth Field HUCs, Elevations by Watershed. Weiser River Watershed.	37
Table 9. Fifth Field HUCs, Aspects. Weiser River Watershed.....	38
Table 10. Land Use Classification and Total Acres. Weiser River Watershed..	40
Table 11. Land Ownership/Management. Weiser River Watershed.....	43
Table 12. General Demographics of Adams and Washington Counties. Weiser River Watershed.	45
Table 13. Idaho 1998 §303(d) listed Water Bodies, Water Body Description, Pollutants of Concern, and Miles of Impaired Sections. Weiser River Watershed.	50
Table 14. Idaho 1998 §303(d) list Water Bodies, Designated Uses, and IDAPA Citations. Weiser River Watershed.	51
Table 15. Multimetric Analysis Approach. Weiser River Watershed.	56
Table 16. Water Quality Standards, Criteria, and Literature Reviews. Weiser River Watershed.	66
Table 17. Sediment Analysis Techniques Used on Suspended Sediment Monitoring for the Weiser River. Weiser River Watershed.....	69
Table 18. Water Quality Standards, Criteria and Literature Reviews. Weiser River Watershed.	71
Table 19. Estimated Mass Balance Discharge for Monthly Outflows (Canal Diversion) and Inflows to the Lower Weiser River. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	77
Table 20. River Diatom Index Scores. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	82
Table 21. Number and Percentage of Fish Species in the Weiser River at Weiser, Idaho. July 1999. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	83

Table 22. River Macroinvertebrate Index Scores. Weiser River at Highway 95 Bridge at Weiser, Idaho. Lower Weiser River, Galloway Dam to Snake River.....	84
Table 23. River Macroinvertebrate Index Scores. Weiser River at Unity Bridge near Weiser, Idaho. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to Snake River.....	84
Table 24. River Macroinvertebrate Index Scores. Weiser River at Galloway Dam. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to Snake River.....	85
Table 25. Geometric Mean <i>E. coli</i> Results, Years 2001 and 2002. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	87
Table 26. Total Suspended Solids and Suspended Sediment Results for Weiser River at the Highway 95 Bridge at Weiser, Idaho, and at Unity Bridge near Weiser, Idaho, 1983, 1988-1989, and 2000-2001.	94
Table 27. Measured and Estimated Discharge, Total Suspended Solid Loads, Total Suspended Solids Concentration, and Error Bias. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	96
Table 28. Estimated Monthly Discharge and Total Suspended Solids Loads and Concentrations for Weiser River at the Highway 95 Bridge at Weiser, Idaho. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	97
Table 29. Percent Substrate Less Than 6 Millimeters in Size. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	97
Table 30. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. Lower Weiser River at Confluence with Snake River. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	98
Table 31. River Diatom Index Scores. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	104
Table 32. Species Count and River Fish Index Scores, Weiser River Lower Canyon Section, Upper Canyon Section, and Near Midvale, Idaho. Weiser River Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.....	106
Table 33. River Macroinvertebrate Index Scores, Weiser River above Crane Creek near Weiser, Idaho, and above Midvale, Idaho. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	107
Table 34. <i>E. coli</i> Geometric Mean Results, Years 2001 and 2002. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.....	109
Table 35. Measured Total Suspended Solid Concentrations, Discharge, and Total Suspended Solid Load, DEQ 2000-2001 Weiser River at Midvale, Idaho. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.....	112
Table 36. Measured and Estimated Total Suspended Solid Concentrations, Discharge, and Suspended Solid Load, DEQ Data 2000-2001. Weiser River at Midvale, Idaho. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam. ...	114
Table 37. Estimated Discharge and Total Suspended Solids Concentrations and Load, Weiser River at USGS Gage No. 13266000. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	115
Table 38. Measured Total Suspended Solid Concentrations, Discharge, and Total Suspended Solid Load, DEQ Data 2000-2001, May through	

September. Weiser River at Midvale, Idaho. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.....	115
Table 39. Percent Substrate Less Than 6 Millimeters in Size. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.....	116
Table 40. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. Middle Weiser River at Galloway Dam. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.....	117
Table 41. Periphyton Result for Specific Indices. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	120
Table 42. River Diatom Index Scores. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	121
Table 43. Presence/Absence of Fish Species. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	122
Table 44. River Macroinvertebrate Index Scores. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	122
Table 45. <i>E. coli</i> Geometric Mean Results for 2003. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	124
Table 46. Percent Substrate Less Than 6 Millimeters in Size. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	125
Table 47. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.....	126
Table 48. Monthly Average Measured Discharge for 1975, 1983-1984, and 2001-2003, Outliers Remaining and Outliers Smoothed for Mann Creek at the Mouth.....	129
Table 49. Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program Results. Mann Creek.....	131
Table 50. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. Mann Creek, Mann Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	132
Table 51. Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program Results. Cove Creek.....	134
Table 52. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. Cove Creek, Headwaters to Weiser River.....	136
Table 53. River Diatom Index Scores. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.....	139
Table 54. River Macroinvertebrate Index Scores. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	139
Table 55. <i>E. coli</i> Individual and Geometric Mean Results, June-July 2003. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	141
Table 56. Duplicate <i>E. coli</i> Individual and Geometric Mean Results, June-July 2003. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	141
Table 57. Measured Total Suspended Solid Concentrations, Discharge, and Total Suspended Solids Load, near USGS Gage No. 13265500. Idaho Department of Agriculture 2000-2002. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.....	144

Table 58. Measured and Estimated Total Suspended Solid Concentrations, Discharge, and Total Suspended Solids Load, USGS Gage No. 13265500. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	145
Table 59. Estimated Monthly Total Suspended Solids Concentrations, Discharge, and Total Suspended Solids Loads at USGS Gage No. 13265500. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	146
Table 60. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	147
Table 61. River Diatom Index Scores. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	152
Table 62a. Species Count and Stream Fish Index Scores, Little Weiser River BURP site 2002SBOIA015, near Cambridge	152
Table 62b. Stream Macroinvertebrate Index Scores, Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	153
Table 62c. Stream Habitat Index Scores, Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River	153
Table 63. <i>E. coli</i> Geometric Mean Results, Year 2002. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	154
Table 64. Percent Substrate Less Than 6 Millimeters in Size. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	156
Table 65. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	157
Table 66. Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program Index Scores for Johnson Creek. Johnson Creek, Headwaters to Weiser River.	159
Table 67. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. Johnson Creek, Headwaters to Weiser River.	159
Table 68. Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program Index Scores for the West Fork Weiser River. West Fork Weiser River, Headwaters to Weiser River.	162
Table 69. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. West Fork Weiser River, Headwaters to Weiser River.	163
Table 70. Available Biological Data for North Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir.	166
Table 71. Geometric Mean and Individual <i>E. coli</i> Results, DEQ June- July 2003. North Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir.	167
Table 72. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. North Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir.	168
Table 73. Biological Assessment of South Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir.	171

Table 74. Support Status of Designated Beneficial Uses, Pollutants Impairing Those Uses, Justifications, and Recommendations. South Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir.....	172
Table 75. Final Conclusions on Assessment, Impaired Uses, and Recommendations for 1998 §303(d) Listed Water Bodies. Weiser River Watershed.	176
Table 76. Nonpoint Source Assessment, Land Use. Weiser River Watershed.	186
Table 77. Measured and Estimated Flows to the Snake River from the Weiser River Watershed and Measured Total Phosphorus Concentrations. Bureau of Reclamation 1987-1989. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	190
Table 78. Measured and Estimated Flows to the Snake River from the Weiser River Watershed, Idaho DEQ 2000-2001. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	191
Table 79. Critical Period (May-September) Statistical Results for Total Phosphorus Concentrations. Weiser River at Highway 95 Bridge, Weiser ID. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	191
Table 80. Mass Balance for Discharge and Total Phosphorus Loads and Concentrations to the Snake River from the Lower Weiser River. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	194
Table 81. Discharge and Total Phosphorus Load Allocation and Concentrations to the Snake River from the Lower Weiser River. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	195
Table 82. Discharge and Total Phosphorus Load Allocation, Concentrations, Load Reductions, and Load Reduction Percentage to the Snake River from the Lower Weiser River. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	196
Table 83. Total Phosphorus Concentrations, Discharge, and Total Phosphorus Load, USGS Gage No. 13266000. USGS Data 1996-1998 and 2000, DEQ Data 2000-2001. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	197
Table 84. Mass Balance for Discharge and Total Phosphorus Loads and Concentrations at USGS Gage Site (13266000). Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.....	198
Table 85. Mass Balance for Discharge and Total Phosphorus Loads and Concentrations at Galloway Dam. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	198
Table 86. Discharge and Total Phosphorus Load Allocation and Concentrations at Galloway Dam. Middle Weiser River. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	199
Table 87. Discharge and Total Phosphorus Load Allocation, Concentrations, and Percent Reduction for the Lower Weiser River. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	200
Table 88. Total Phosphorus Concentration, Discharge, and Total Phosphorus Load. USGS (1974-1975 and 1981-1982) and DEQ Data (2000-2001). West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.....	201

Table 89. Estimated Total Phosphorus Concentrations, Discharge, and Total Phosphorus Loads, Weiser River near Cambridge, May through September. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	202
Table 90. Monthly Monitoring Requirement for the City of Cambridge Wastewater Treatment Plant and Effluent Limitations. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	203
Table 91. Water Quality Monitoring Results for the City of Cambridge Wastewater Treatment Plant Effluent. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	203
Table 92. Estimated Total Phosphorus Concentrations, Discharge, and Total Phosphorus Loads, Weiser River near Cambridge, May through September. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	204
Table 93. Measured Total Phosphorus Concentrations and Loads, Mann Creek at Weiser River. DEQ 1983 and Idaho Department of Agriculture 2001-2003.	205
Table 94. Discharge and Total Phosphorus Load Allocation and Concentrations Mann Creek at Confluence with Weiser River.	206
Table 95. Discharge and Total Phosphorus Load Allocation, Concentrations, and Percent Reduction for Mann Creek. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	206
Table 96. Measured Discharge and Total Phosphorus Concentrations and Loads, Tributaries to the Lower Weiser River. DEQ 1983 and Idaho Department of Agriculture 2001-2003. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to Snake River.	208
Table 97. Discharge and Total Phosphorus Load Allocation and Concentrations, Tributaries to Lower Weiser River. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to Snake River.	210
Table 98. Discharge, Current Total Phosphorus Load, Load Allocation, Reduction Required, and Percent Reduction Required, Tributaries to Lower Weiser River. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to Snake River.	211
Table 99. Measured Total Phosphorus Concentrations and Loads, Little Weiser at Weiser River. DEQ 2000-2001. Little Weiser River near Confluence with Weiser River. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	212
Table 100. Estimated Total Phosphorus Concentrations and Loads, Little Weiser at Weiser River. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	213
Table 101. Discharge, and Total Phosphorus Load Allocations and Concentrations, Little Weiser River at Confluence with Weiser River. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	214
Table 102. Discharge, Current Total Phosphorus Load, Total Phosphorus Load Allocation, Load Reduction, and Percent Reductions. Little Weiser River at Confluence with Weiser River. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	214

Table 103. Water Quality Targets for Specific Water Bodies. Weiser River Watershed.	218
Table 104. Water Quality Target Rationale. Weiser River Watershed.....	219
Table 105. Load Capacity, Lower Weiser River.....	221
Table 106. Load Capacity, Middle Weiser River.	221
Table 107. Load Capacity, Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.....	222
Table 108. Load Capacity, Little Weiser River.....	222
Table 109. Existing Loads, Lower Weiser River.	223
Table 110. Existing Loads, Middle Weiser River.	223
Table 111. Existing Loads, Crane Creek.	224
Table 112. Existing Loads, Little Weiser River.	224
Table 113. Margin of Safety and Rationale, Selected Water Bodies. Weiser River Watershed.	226
Table 114. Background Allocations and Rationale, Selected Water Bodies. Weiser River Watershed.....	227
Table 115. Load Allocations, Lower Weiser River.....	231
Table 116. Load Allocation, Middle Weiser River.....	231
Table 117. Load Allocations, Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.....	232
Table 118. Load Capacity, Little Weiser River.....	232
Table 119. Regulatory Authority for Nonpoint Pollution Sources. Weiser River Watershed.	237
Table 120. Water Quality TMDLs and Targets for Selected Water Quality Limited Segments. Weiser River Watershed.....	242
Table 120. (Continued). Water Quality TMDLs and Targets for Selected Water Quality Limited Segments. Weiser River Watershed.....	243

List of Figures

Figure A. Weiser River Watershed Vicinity Map.....	xx
Figure B. Idaho §303(d) Listed Water Bodies. Weiser River Watershed.	xxii
Figure 1. Subbasin at a Glance. Weiser River Watershed.....	3
Figure 2. Weiser River Watershed.....	5
Figure 3. Precipitation Range. Weiser River Watershed.	8
Figure 4. Overall Hydrology and Stream Order. Weiser River Watershed.	11
Figure 5. Weiser River Historic Discharges, Three U.S. Geological Survey Gage Sites: No. 13258500, No. 13263500, and No. 13266000. Weiser River Watershed.	12
Figure 6. Weiser River Historic Discharges, Crane Creek at Mouth, Gage Site No. 13265500. Weiser River Watershed.....	12
Figure 7. Current and Historic Gage Sites. Weiser River Watershed.....	14
Figure 8. Dams. Weiser River Watershed.	15
Figure 9. Geology. Weiser River Watershed.....	22
Figure 10. Soils. Weiser River Watershed.	23
Figure 11. Elevations. Weiser River Watershed.	25
Figure 12. Contours and Elevations in Meters. Weiser River Watershed.	26
Figure 13. Slopes. Weiser River Watershed. (DEM Generated Map, Scale Different from Other GIS Generated Maps)	27
Figure 14. Land Cover. Weiser River Watershed.	29
Figure 15. Key Bull Trout Watersheds. Weiser River Watershed.	32
Figure 16. Key Bull Trout Watersheds and Applicable State Water Quality Temperature Criteria Area. Weiser River Watershed.....	33
Figure 17. Fifth Field HUCs and Acreage. Weiser River Watershed.....	35
Figure 18. General Aspect. Weiser River Watershed. (DEM Generated Map, Scale Different from Other GIS Generated Maps)	39
Figure 19. County Boundaries. Weiser River Watershed.	41
Figure 20. Land Use. Weiser River Watershed.....	42
Figure 21. Ownership/Land Management. Weiser River Watershed.	44
Figure 22. Idaho's §303(d) listed water bodies and delisted water bodies. Weiser River Watershed.....	49
Figure 23. Aquatic Life Support Determination Flow-Chart. Weiser River Watershed.	54
Figure 24. Historic Discharge Data. Weiser River near Weiser, ID. USGS Station ID 13266000. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	78
Figure 25. Measured Discharge at Highway 95 Bridge and Estimated Discharge to the Snake River. Weiser River at Weiser, ID. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	78
Figure 26. Siltation Index Values. Lower Weiser River. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	80
Figure 27. Pollution Tolerance Index Values. Lower Weiser River. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.....	81

Figure 28. Water Temperature, Weiser River at Weiser, Idaho. July 2000.	
Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	88
Figure 29. Water Temperature, Weiser River at Weiser, Idaho. August-September 2000. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	88
Figure 30. Ambient Air and Water Temperature. Weiser River at Highway 95 Bridge, Weiser, Idaho. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River... ..	89
Figure 31. Water Temperature. Weiser River at USGS Gage No. 13266000 near Weiser, Idaho. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	89
Figure 32. Instantaneous Dissolved Oxygen Results, BOR 1987-1989. Weiser River at Highway 95 Bridge at Weiser, Idaho. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	90
Figure 33. Instantaneous Dissolved Oxygen Results, DEQ 2000. Weiser River at Highway 95 Bridge at Weiser, Idaho. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	91
Figure 34. Diel Dissolved Oxygen Results, DEQ 2000. Weiser River at Highway 95 Bridge at Weiser, Idaho. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	91
Figure 35. Natural Log Plots for Measured Total Suspended Solids Load (Y axis) as a Function of Measured Flows (X axis). Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River.	95
Figure 36. Normalized Average Daily Discharge at USGS Gage No. 13266000, Historic Discharge Weiser River above Crane Creek at USGS Gage No. 13263500, and above Cambridge at USGS Gage No. 13258500. Weiser River near Weiser, ID.	100
Figure 37. Normalized Average Daily Discharge at USGS Gage No. 13265500 (Crane Creek) and Historic Discharge from USGS Gage No. 1326500 (Little Weiser River).	101
Figure 38. Siltation Index Values. Middle Weiser River. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	102
Figure 39. Pollution Tolerance Index Values. Middle Weiser River. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	103
Figure 40. Twenty-Four Hour Temperature-Dissolved Oxygen Monitoring August 16-17, Weiser River near USGS Gage No. 13266000. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	110
Figure 41. Instantaneous Dissolved Oxygen Levels, Weiser River near USGS Gage No. 13266000. USGS Data 1996-1998 and 1999-2000. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	110
Figure 42. Instantaneous Dissolved Oxygen Levels, Weiser River near USGS Gage No. 13266000. DEQ Data 2000-2001. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	111
Figure 43. Instantaneous Dissolved Oxygen Levels, Weiser River at Midvale, Idaho. DEQ Data 2000-2001. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	111
Figure 44. Regression Analysis for Total Suspended Solid Loads as a Function of Discharge. Weiser River at USGS Gage No. 13266000. DEQ 2000-2001. Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam.	113

Figure 45. Normalized Average Daily Discharge at USGS Gage No. 13258500. Weiser River near Cambridge, ID. Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.	119
Figure 46. Instantaneous Dissolved Oxygen Levels, Upper Weiser River near Cambridge. DEQ Data 2000-2001. West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River.....	124
Figure 47. Average Daily Discharge From Mann Creek (Pre Dam Construction), USGS Gage No. 13267000 (Period of Record 1911-1913, 1920, 1937-1961) and Mann Creek Release from Mann Creek Reservoir, USGS Gage No. 13267050 (Period of Record 1967-1971).	128
Figure 48. Mann Creek Diversions.	130
Figure 49. Discharge Measurements for Cove Creek, 2001-2003.	134
Figure 50. Normalized Average Daily Discharge at USGS Gage No. 13265500. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	138
Figure 51. Instantaneous Dissolved Oxygen Levels, Crane Creek at USGS Gage No. 13265500. DEQ Data 1983-1984. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	142
Figure 52. Instantaneous Dissolved Oxygen Levels, Crane Creek at USGS Gage No. 13265500. Idaho Department of Agriculture Data 2000-2003. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	143
Figure 53. Regression Analysis for Suspended Sediment Load as a Function of Discharge. Crane Creek at USGS Gage No. 13265500. Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River.	145
Figure 54. Normalized Average Daily Discharge at USGS Gage No. 13261500. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.....	149
Figure 55. Normalized Average Daily Discharge at USGS Gage No. 13261500 below Ben Ross Reservoir Diversion and at USGS Gage No. 13261000 above Ben Ross Reservoir Diversion. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	150
Figure 56. Discharge Results Little Weiser River near Confluence with Weiser River, near Cambridge, Idaho. DEQ 2000-2001. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.	151
Figure 57. Instantaneous Dissolved Oxygen Levels, Little Weiser River near Confluence with Weiser River. DEQ Data 2000-2001. Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River.....	155
Figure 58. Discharge 2001-2002, Idaho Department of Agriculture, Upper North Crane Creek Site. North Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir.	165
Figure 59. Discharge 2001-2003, Idaho Department of Agriculture, Lower North Crane Creek Site. North Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir.	165
Figure 60. Discharge 2000-2003, Idaho Department of Agriculture. South Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir.....	170
Figure 61. Crane Creek below Crane Creek Reservoir Outlet, Pre-Dam Construction (1911) and Post Dam Construction (1932), USGS Gage No. 13264500. Crane Creek Reservoir.	174

Figure 62. Regression Analysis of Suspended Sediment Concentration and Total Suspended Solids. Multiple Weiser River Sites. Weiser River Watershed. 179

Figure 63. Regression Analysis of Suspended Sediment Concentration and Total Suspended Solids. Weiser River at Highway 95 Bridge at Weiser, Idaho. Weiser River Watershed. 180

Figure 64. Nonpoint Source Assessment Area Land Use. Weiser River Watershed. 187

Figure 65. Total Phosphorus Concentrations, Weiser River at Highway 95 Bridge at Weiser, Idaho. DEQ Data 2000-2001. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River. 189

Figure 66. Total Phosphorus Concentrations, Weiser River at Highway 95 Bridge at Weiser, Idaho. BOR Data 1987-1989. Weiser River, Galloway Dam to the Snake River. 190

Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols

§303(d)	Refers to section 303 subsection (d) of the Clean Water Act, or a list of impaired water bodies required by this section	EPT	Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera and Trichoptera
§	Section (usually a section of federal or state rules or statutes)	F	Fahrenheit
µg/L	micrograms per liter	HUC	Hydrologic Unit Code
Ag Plan	Idaho Agricultural Pollution Abatement Plan	IDAPA	Refers to citations of Idaho administrative rules
BMP	best management practice	j/m²/s	Joules/meter ² /second
BOR	United States Bureau of Reclamation	kg/day	kilograms per day
BURP	Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program	km	kilometer
C	Celsius	km²	square kilometer
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations (refers to citations in the federal administrative rules)	LA	load allocation
cfs	cubic feet per second	LC	load capacity
cfu	colony forming units	mg/L	milligrams per liter
CWA	Clean Water Act	mm	millimeter
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality	MOS	margin of safety
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency	mpn	most probable number
<i>E. coli</i>	<i>Escherichia coli</i>	NA	not applicable
		NB	natural background
		NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
		NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
		NSMP	nonpoint source management plan

NTU	nephelometric turbidity unit	WQS	water quality standard(s)
RDI	DEQ's river diatom index	WWTP	wastewater treatment plant
RFI	DEQ's river fish index		
RMI	DEQ's river macroinvertebrate index		
RPI	DEQ's river physiochemical index		
SBA	subbasin assessment		
SCD	Soil Conservation District		
SFI	DEQ's stream fish index		
SHI	DEQ's stream habitat index		
SMI	DEQ's stream macroinvertebrate index		
SSC	suspended sediment concentration		
SSTEMP	Stream Segment Temperature Model		
TMDL	total maximum daily load		
TSS	total suspended solids		
U.S.	United States		
U.S.C.	United States Code		
USGS	United States Geological Survey		
WAG	Watershed Advisory Group		
WLA	waste load allocation		
WQLS	water quality limited segment		

Executive Summary

The federal Clean Water Act requires that states and tribes restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. States and tribes, pursuant to Section 303 of the Clean Water Act, are to adopt water quality standards necessary to protect fish, shellfish, and wildlife while providing for recreation in and on the waters whenever possible. Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act establishes requirements for states and tribes to identify and prioritize water bodies that are water quality limited (i.e., water bodies that do not meet water quality standards). States and tribes must periodically publish a priority list of impaired waters, currently every two years. For waters identified on this list, states and tribes must develop a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for the pollutants, set at a level to achieve water quality standards. This document addresses the water bodies in the Weiser River Watershed that have been placed on what is known as the "§303(d) list."

This subbasin assessment and total maximum daily load analysis has been developed to comply with Idaho's total maximum daily load schedule. This assessment describes the physical, biological, and cultural setting; water quality status; pollutant sources; and recent pollution control actions in the Weiser River Watershed located in southwestern Idaho. The first part of this document, the subbasin assessment, is an important first step in leading to the total maximum daily load. The starting point for this assessment was Idaho's current §303(d) list of water quality limited water bodies. Twelve segments of the Weiser River Watershed were listed on this list. The subbasin assessment portion of this document examines the current status of §303(d) listed waters and defines the extent of impairment and causes of water quality limitation throughout the subbasin. The loading analysis quantifies pollutant sources and allocates responsibility for load reductions needed to return listed waters to a condition of meeting water quality standards.

Subbasin at a Glance

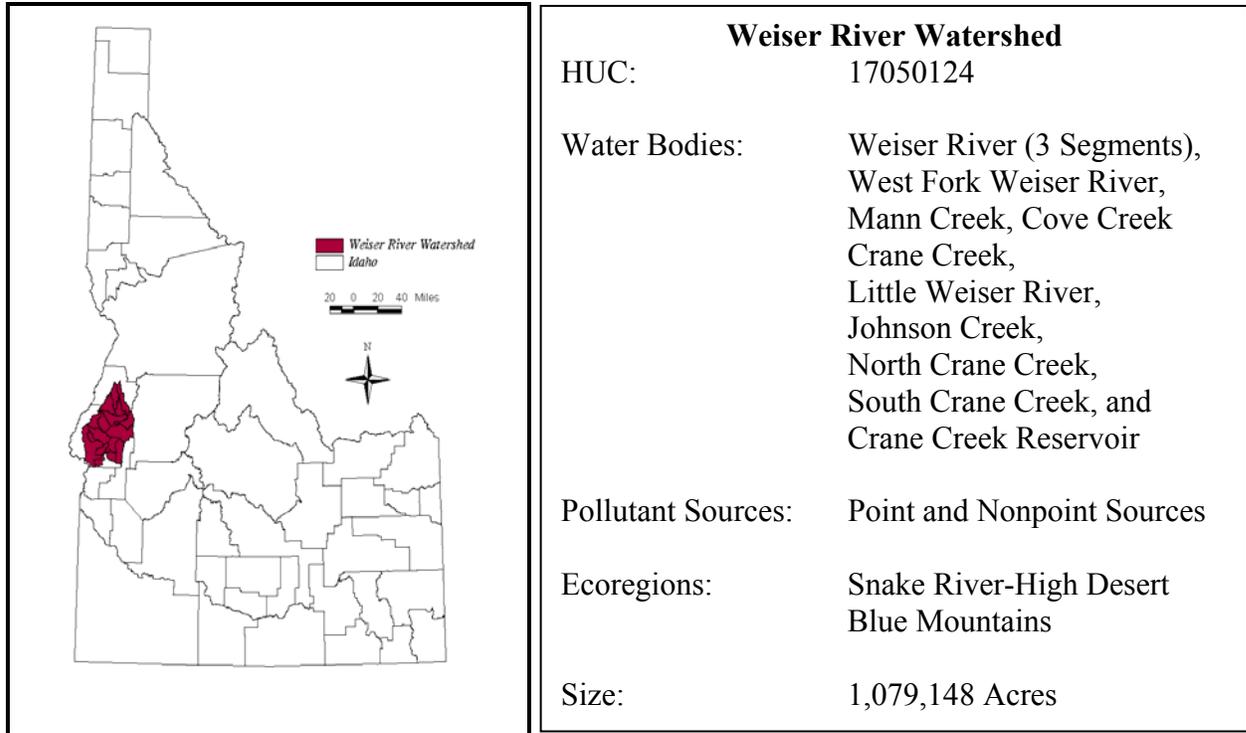


Figure A. Weiser River Watershed Vicinity Map.

The Weiser River Watershed, hydrologic unit code 17050124, encompasses a large area in southwestern Idaho (Figure A). The headwaters for the Weiser River originate in the southern end of the Seven Devil Mountain Range and the west central mountains of Idaho. The watershed size is 1,079,148 acres solely within the state of Idaho. There are no tribal lands within the watershed and the only interstate water is the Snake River, which the Weiser River discharges to.

Land uses in the Weiser River Watershed consist of dry land agriculture, irrigated agriculture, rangeland, forest, and riparian or open water. Land ownership is a mix of private holdings, federally managed lands, and state-managed lands. A majority of the population is associated with small homesteads scattered throughout the watershed. The municipalities of Weiser, Midvale, Cambridge, and Council are the only recognized urban areas in the watershed.

Overall, there are twelve water quality limited segments within the Weiser River Watershed that were placed on the Idaho 1998 §303(d) list:

- One segment is a reservoir: Crane Creek Reservoir. Action on Crane Creek Reservoir will be delayed until 2007 to allow further study and to assess the status and appropriateness of designated uses.
- Three segments of the Weiser River were listed on the Idaho 1998 §303(d) list.
- The remaining water bodies are tributaries to the Weiser River or Crane Creek Reservoir.

Information about these segments is provided in Figure B and Tables A and B:

- Figure B shows the Idaho 1998 §303(d) listed segments in the Weiser River Watershed.
- Table A details each listed segment's impaired uses and pollutant(s) of concern. Each segment will be addressed separately in this executive summary.
- Table B shows a breakdown of the findings in the subbasin assessment and actions to be taken (i.e., delist, list, or develop a total maximum daily load).

Sediment, bacteria, flow alteration, nutrients, and temperature are the listed pollutants of concern. It is through the subbasin assessment process that the segments and any available data are analyzed to determine the support status of the beneficial uses in the segment. These uses include cold water aquatic life, primary or secondary contact recreation, salmonid spawning, water supply, wildlife, and aesthetics.

Those water bodies determined to be not fully supporting their designated or existing beneficial uses and not meeting applicable water quality standards are required to have a total maximum daily load developed. For the Weiser River Watershed, five segments were determined not to be supporting the designated or existing beneficial use. Three segments were determined to be intermittent water bodies, two were determined to be fully supporting designated or existing uses, and the remaining two require further verification. Support status was determined by comparing water quality data to Idaho water quality criteria and assessing biological information.

Total maximum daily loads were developed to address sediment, bacteria, and temperature in the Weiser River Watershed. Additionally, total phosphorus load allocations have been established based on load allocations set in the *Snake River-Hells Canyon Subbasin Assessment and Total Maximum Daily Load* (Idaho DEQ and Oregon DEQ 2004).

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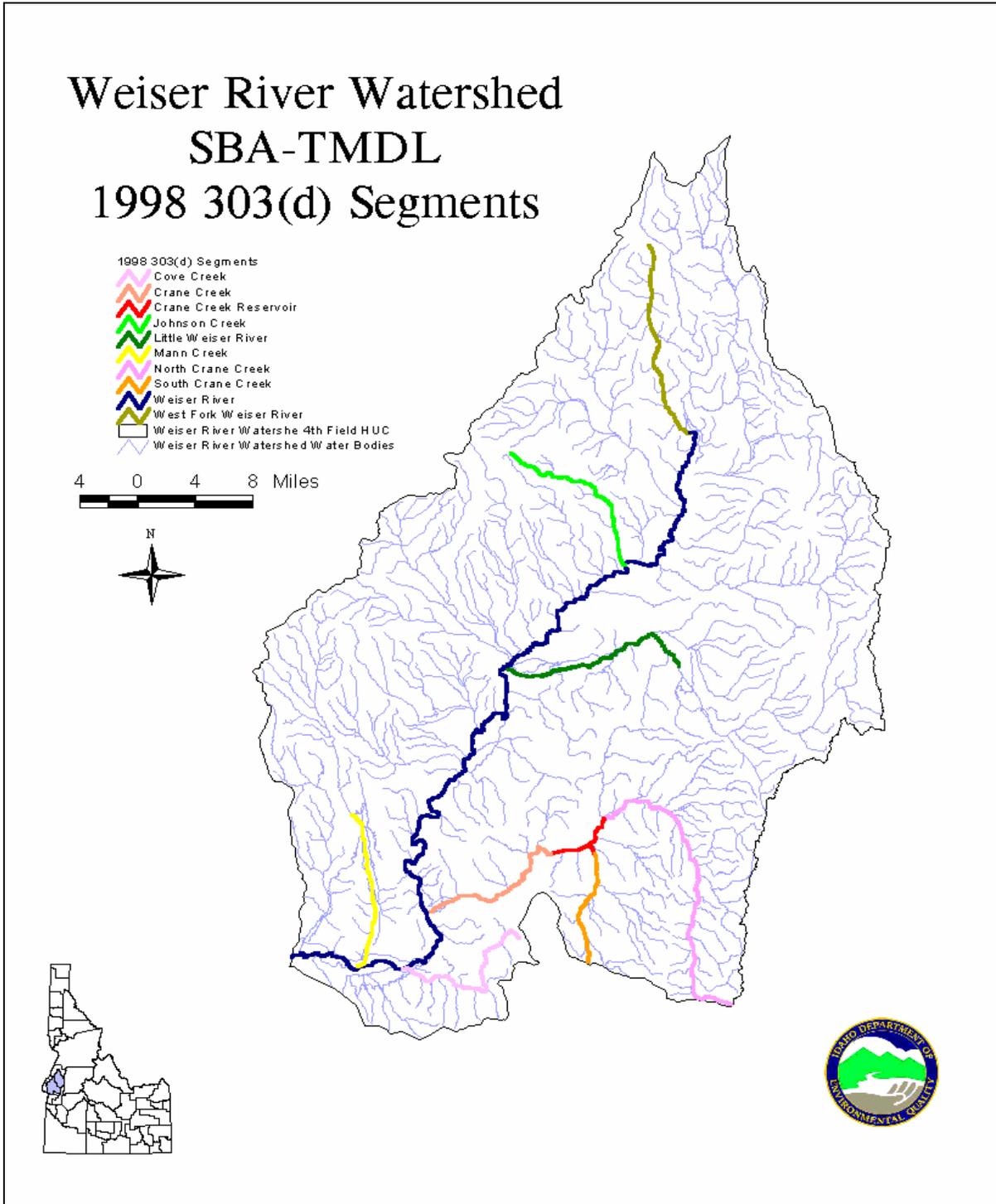


Figure B. Idaho §303(d) Listed Water Bodies. Weiser River Watershed.

Table A. Idaho 1998 §303(d) Listed Segments. Weiser River Watershed.

Stream	Boundary	Listed Pollutants
Weiser River	Galloway Dam to Snake River	Nutrients, Sediment, Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen, and Temperature
Weiser River	Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam	Nutrients, Bacteria, and Sediment
Weiser River	West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River	Nutrients and Sediment
Mann Creek	Mann Creek Reservoir to Weiser River	Sediment
Cove Creek	Headwaters to Weiser River	Nutrients and Sediment
Crane Creek	Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River	Bacteria, Nutrients, and Sediment
Little Weiser River	Indian Valley to Weiser River	Nutrients and Sediment
Johnson Creek	Headwaters to Weiser River	Unknown
West Fork Weiser River	Headwaters to Weiser River	Unknown
North Crane Creek	Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir	Bacteria, Flow, Nutrients, Sediment, and Temperature
South Crane Creek	Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir	Unknown
Crane Creek Reservoir	Reservoir	Nutrients and Sediment

Table B. Summary of Assessment Outcomes. Weiser River Watershed.

Water Body ^a	Assessment Unit (HUC 17050124)	TMDLs/ Allocations Completed	Recommended Changes to §303(d) List	Recommended Schedule Changes	Justification
Weiser River, (Galloway Dam to Snake River)	SW001_05	Sediment Bacteria <i>Total Phosphorus</i> ^a PNV temperature	Remove Dissolved Oxygen and Nutrients as Pollutants of Concern		Diel monitoring conducted did not indicate exceedence of dissolved oxygen criteria. Nuisance aquatic growth not detected by dissolved oxygen.
Weiser River, (Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam)	SW001_05 SW007_05	Sediment <i>Total Phosphorus</i> PNV temperature	Remove Bacteria and Nutrients as Pollutants of Concern.		Nuisance aquatic growth not detected by dissolved oxygen monitoring. Geo-metric mean bacteria count did not exceed criteria.
Weiser River, (West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River)	SW007_05	PNV temperature			Other parameters Full Support per <i>Water Body Assessment Guidance</i>
Mann Creek, (Mann Creek Reservoir to Weiser River)	SW030_03	PNV temperature			Other parameters Full Support per <i>Water Body Assessment Guidance</i>
Cove Creek, (Headwaters to Weiser River)	SW002_02		Remove Segment from §303(d) List		Intermittent Water Body
Crane Creek, (Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River)	SW003_05	Sediment Bacteria <i>Total Phosphorus</i> PNV temperature	Remove Nutrients as Pollutant of Concern		
Little Weiser River, (Indian Valley to Weiser River)	SW008_03 SW008_04	Bacteria Sediment <i>Total Phosphorus</i> PNV temperature	Remove Nutrients as Pollutant of Concern Add Bacteria as a Pollutant of Concern		
Johnson Creek, (Headwaters to Weiser River)	SW022_02 SW022_03		Remove Segment from §303(d) List		Other parameters Full Support per <i>Water Body Assessment Guidance</i>
West Fork Weiser River (Headwaters to Weiser River)	SW017_02 SW017_03	PNV temperature			Other parameters Full Support per <i>Water Body Assessment Guidance</i>
North Crane Cr., (Headwaters to Crane Creek Res.)	SW006_02 SW006_03 SW006_04	PNV temperature			Other parameters Full Support per <i>Water Body Assessment Guidance</i>
South Crane Cr., (Headwaters to Crane Creek Res.)	SW005_02		Remove Segment from §303(d) List		Intermittent Water Body
Crane Creek Reservoir	SW004_04 SW004L_04L	Total Phosphorus Sediment		Delay action until 2007	Additional study of reservoir water quality and assessment of designated uses

^a Indicates total phosphorus allocations developed

PNV temperature – See Potential Natural Vegetation (PNV) temperature TMDLs in the addendum.

Key Findings

Each 1998 §303(d) listed water body will be addressed separately. Pollutants of concern are discussed within the summary, with additional data and information provided in Section 2. Recommendations are provided along with the rationale for those recommendations.

Weiser River, Galloway Dam to Snake River

Water Body	Weiser River, Galloway Dam to Snake River
Miles of impaired water body	12.4
Listed pollutants	Sediment, Temperature, Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen, and Nutrients
Impaired designated uses	Cold water aquatic life and primary contact recreation
TMDL/Allocations goals	Nutrients: total phosphorus allocations as established in Snake River-Hells Canyon TMDL Sediment: targets set at literature values for the full support of cold water aquatic life Bacteria: state of Idaho water quality criteria Temperature: state of Idaho water quality criteria (PNV temperature TMDL, see addendum)
Further listing recommendations	Remove dissolved oxygen and nutrients as pollutants of concern
Potential sources	Stream bank erosion, overland flow, animal feeding operations, wildlife, tributary inflows, and solar radiation

Biological assessment was completed on the lower Weiser River per *Idaho Water Body Assessment Guidance* (Grafe et al. 2002), and the results of this assessment indicate the following:

- The River Fish Index score was “below minimal threshold,” indicating the segment is not supporting the cold water aquatic life designated use.
- Bacteria (*Escherichia coli* [*E. coli*]) monitoring conducted in 2001 and 2002 showed exceedances of Idaho water quality geometric mean criteria, indicating primary contact recreation is not fully supported.
- Water temperatures showed exceedances of Idaho water quality criteria for maximum daily average temperature and daily average temperature.
- Diel dissolved oxygen concentrations were examined and showed that dissolved oxygen concentrations do not fall below Idaho water quality criteria in the lower Weiser River.

The biological assessment also indicated a high presence of sediment tolerant species. Analysis of macroinvertebrate and periphyton species indicated that sediment is impairing the composition and diversity of the indicator species present in the lower Weiser River. A total maximum daily load for total suspended solids and a substrate target have been established to protect designated beneficial uses:

- A total suspended solid target of a 50 milligrams per liter (mg/L) monthly average will need to be met to protect the designated beneficial uses. A load reduction for total suspended solids will require an overall reduction of 8-11% during high loading periods.
- Additionally, a substrate target of no more than 30% of the substrate as fine sediment (<6 millimeters [mm]) has been established.

A bacteria load for *E. coli* has been established to achieve full support for primary and secondary contact recreation. A reduction of approximately 90% will be required to meet Idaho water quality criteria for supporting primary and secondary contact recreation.

The *Snake River-Hells Canyon Subbasin Assessment and Total Maximum Daily Load* (Idaho DEQ and Oregon DEQ 2004) placed a total phosphorus concentration target/allocation on the Weiser River and other tributaries that discharge to the Snake River from southwestern Idaho and eastern Oregon. Water quality data for the lower Weiser River showed that the May through September total phosphorus load would need to be reduced by 28-69% to reach the total phosphorus target/allocation set for the Weiser River.

Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam

Water Body	Weiser River, Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam
Miles of impaired water body	20.9
Listed pollutants	Sediment, bacteria, and nutrients
Impaired designated uses	Cold water aquatic life and primary contact recreation
TMDL/Allocation goals	Nutrients: total phosphorus allocations as established in the downstream segment and Snake River-Hells Canyon TMDL Sediment: targets set at literature values for the full support of cold water aquatic life Temperature: PNV temperature TMDL (see addendum)
Further listing recommendations	Remove bacteria and nutrients as pollutants of concern
Potential sources	Stream bank erosion, overland flow, and tributary inflows

A biological assessment was completed on the middle Weiser River per *Idaho Water Body Assessment Guidance* (Grafe et al. 2002), and the results of this assessment indicated the following:

- The *River Fish Index* score was “below minimal threshold,” indicating the segment is not supporting the cold water aquatic life designated use or salmonid spawning.
- Bacteria monitoring conducted in 2001 and 2002 showed Idaho water quality geometric mean criteria were not exceeded, indicating primary contact recreation is fully supported.
- Water temperatures showed exceedances of Idaho water quality criteria for maximum daily average temperature and daily average temperature; this is a major influence on downstream water temperatures.

The biological assessment also indicated a high presence of sediment tolerant species. Analysis of macroinvertebrate and periphyton species indicated that sediment is impairing the composition and diversity of the indicator species present in the middle Weiser River. Consequently, a total maximum daily load for total suspended solids and a substrate target have been established to protect designated beneficial uses:

- A total suspended solid target of 50 mg/L monthly average will need to be met to protect the designated beneficial uses. A load reduction for total suspended solids will require an overall reduction of 11-45% during high loading periods.
- A substrate target of no more than 30% of the substrate as fine sediment (<6 mm) has also been established.

The *Snake River-Hells Canyon Subbasin Assessment and Total Maximum Daily Load* (Idaho DEQ and Oregon DEQ 2004) placed a total phosphorus concentration target/allocation on the Weiser River. To meet the goals established for the lower Weiser River, total phosphorus reductions from the middle Weiser River and its tributaries need to occur as well. Water quality data for the middle Weiser River showed that the May through September total phosphorus load would need to be reduced by 21-89% to reach the total phosphorus target/allocations set for the lower Weiser River.

See the Addendum to the Weiser River Subbasin Assessment and TMDL for information about the Potential Natural Vegetation (PNV) temperature TMDL.

Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River

Water Body	Weiser River, West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River
Miles of impaired water body	31.5
Listed pollutants	Sediment and nutrients
Impaired designated uses	No impairment to designated uses from listed pollutants
TMDL goal	Temperature: PNV temperature TMDL (see addendum)
Further listing recommendations	Remove from §303(d) list for listed pollutants
Potential sources	Not applicable

A biological assessment was completed on the upper Weiser River per *Idaho Water Body Assessment Guidance* (Grafe et al. 2002). The overall “Condition Rating” for the upper Weiser River segment indicates the segment is fully supporting cold water aquatic life. Neither a nutrient nor a sediment total maximum daily load nor allocations are required. Total phosphorus concentrations are well below the target concentration in the middle-lower Weiser River segments and the target for the Snake River. The upper Weiser River segment is the only segment with permitted point source discharges. Waste load allocations for these permitted facilities will be established based on their current permitted discharge levels. Additional bacteria monitoring showed no exceedence of the geometric mean criteria and primary contact recreation is fully supported.

See the Addendum to the Weiser River Subbasin Assessment and TMDL for information about the Potential Natural Vegetation (PNV) temperature TMDL.

Mann Creek, Mann Creek Reservoir to Weiser River

Water Body	Mann Creek, Mann Creek Reservoir to Weiser River
Miles of impaired water body	13.0
Listed pollutants	Sediment
Impaired designated uses	No impairment to designated uses from listed pollutants
TMDL goal	Temperature: PNV temperature TMDL (see addendum)
Further listing recommendations	Remove from §303(d) list for listed pollutant
Potential sources	Not applicable

A biological assessment was completed on Mann Creek per *Idaho Water Body Assessment Guidance* (Grafe et al. 2002), and the overall “Condition Rating” for Mann Creek indicated the segment is fully supporting cold water aquatic life and salmonid

spawning. However, Mann Creek is a significant source of total phosphorus and sediment to the lower Weiser River. Further assessment and allocations for tributaries to the lower Weiser River will be required to target critical areas of concern. The final loading analysis completed in the subbasin assessment will assist in identifying critical periods and areas of concern.

See the Addendum to the Weiser River Subbasin Assessment and TMDL for information about the Potential Natural Vegetation (PNV) temperature TMDL.

Cove Creek, Headwaters to Weiser River

Water Body	Cove Creek Headwaters to Weiser River
Miles of impaired water body	14.0
Listed pollutants	Sediment and nutrients
Impaired designated uses	Intermittent water body; no designated uses
TMDL goal	No TMDL required, intermittent water body
Further listing recommendations	Remove water body from §303(d) list
Potential Sources	Not applicable

Cove Creek has been determined to be an intermittent water body, so Idaho water quality standards and criteria for intermittent water bodies apply.

Cove Creek is a source of total phosphorus and sediment to the lower Weiser River. Further assessment and allocations for lower Weiser River tributaries will be required to target critical periods and areas of concern. The final loading analysis completed in the subbasin assessment will assist in identifying these critical periods and areas of concern.

Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River

Water Body	Crane Creek, Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River
Miles of impaired water body	12.6
Listed pollutants	Sediment, bacteria, and nutrients
Impaired designated uses	Cold water aquatic life and primary contact recreation
TMDL/Allocation goals	Nutrients: total phosphorus allocations as established in middle and lower Weiser River Sediment: targets set at literature values for the full support of cold water aquatic life Bacteria: State of Idaho water quality criteria Temperature: PNV temperature TMDL (see addendum)
Further listing recommendations	Remove nutrients as a pollutant of concern
Potential Sources	Stream bank erosion, overland flow, and Crane Creek Reservoir

A biological assessment was completed on Crane Creek per *Idaho Water Body Assessment Guidance* (Grafe et al. 2002), and the results of this assessment indicate the following:

- The River Macroinvertebrate Score was “below minimal threshold” indicating the segment is not supporting the cold water aquatic life designated use.
- Bacteria monitoring conducted in 2003 showed exceedances of Idaho water quality criteria (geometric mean) indicating primary contact recreation is not fully supported.
- The biological assessment also indicated a high presence of sediment tolerant species. An analysis of macroinvertebrate and periphyton species indicated that sediment is impairing the composition and diversity of the indicator species present in Crane Creek.
- Total suspended solid data indicated no exceedances of the 50 mg/L recommended criteria for the protection of cold water aquatic life. In lieu of a water column sediment target, a substrate percent fines target has been established as a surrogate measure. This target is no greater than 30% fines 6 mm or smaller.
- A bacteria load for *E. coli* has been established to achieve full support for primary and secondary contact recreation. A reduction of approximately 83% will be required to meet Idaho water quality criteria for supporting primary and secondary contact recreation.
- To meet the target/allocation established for the lower Weiser River, a total phosphorus reduction from the Crane Creek needs to occur. Water quality data for Crane Creek showed that the May through September total phosphorus load would need to be reduced by 64-73% to reach the total phosphorus target for the lower Weiser River.
- See the Addendum to the Weiser River Subbasin Assessment and TMDL for information about the Potential Natural Vegetation (PNV) temperature TMDL.

Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River

Water Body	Little Weiser River, Indian Valley to Weiser River
Miles of impaired water body	17.3
Listed pollutants	Sediment and nutrients
Impaired designated uses	Cold water aquatic life and primary contact recreation
TMDL/Allocation goals	Nutrients: total phosphorus allocations as established in middle and lower Weiser River Sediment: targets set at literature values for the full support of cold water aquatic life Bacteria: State of Idaho water quality criteria Temperature: PNV temperature TMDL (see addendum)
Further listing recommendations	Remove nutrients as a pollutant of concern Add bacteria as a pollutant of concern
Potential Sources	Stream bank erosion and overland flow

A biological assessment was completed on the Little Weiser River per *Idaho Water Body Assessment Guidance* (Grafe et al. 2002), and the results of this assessment indicate the following:

- The BURP scores at two sites were “not full support”.
- The biological assessment also indicated a high presence of sediment tolerant species. An analysis of macroinvertebrate and periphyton species indicated that sediment is impairing the composition and diversity of the indicator species present in the Little Weiser River.
- Total suspended solid data indicated no exceedances of the 50 mg/L recommended criteria for the protection of cold water aquatic life. In lieu of a water column sediment target, a substrate percent fines target has been established as a surrogate measure. This target is no greater than 30% fines 6 mm or smaller.
- In 2002, routine monitoring showed an exceedance of the single sample criteria for *E. coli*. Additional sampling showed exceedances of Idaho water quality criteria (geometric mean), indicating primary contact recreation is not fully supported.
- To meet the goals established for the lower Weiser River, a total phosphorus reduction from the Little Weiser River may need to occur during the months of May and June. Although a specific allocation has not been established for the water body, a loading analysis has been completed. Further monitoring will be required to determine the proportions of reductions that may need to occur.
- See the Addendum to the Weiser River Subbasin Assessment and TMDL for information about the Potential Natural Vegetation (PNV) temperature TMDL.

The preliminary biological assessment also indicated a high presence of sediment tolerant species. Total suspended solid data indicated no exceedances of the 50 mg/L recommended criteria for the protection of cold water aquatic life. In lieu of a water column sediment target, a substrate percent fines target has been established as a surrogate measure. This target is no greater than 30% fines 6 mm or smaller. A bacteria

load for *E. coli* has been established to achieve full support for primary and secondary contact recreation. A reduction of approximately 81% will be required to meet Idaho water quality criteria for supporting primary and secondary contact recreation.

Johnson Creek, Headwaters to Weiser River

Water Body	Johnson Creek, Headwaters to Weiser River
Miles of Impaired Water Body	13.7
Listed Pollutants	Unknown
Impaired Designated Uses	No impairment to designated uses
TMDL Goal	No TMDL required
Further listing recommendations	Remove water body from §303(d) list
Potential Sources	Not applicable

A biological assessment was completed on Johnson Creek per *Idaho Water Body Assessment Guidance* (Grafe et al. 2002). The overall “Condition Rating” for Johnson Creek indicated the segment is fully supporting cold water aquatic life and salmonid spawning.

West Fork Weiser River, Headwaters to Weiser River

Water Body	West Fork Weiser River, Headwaters to Weiser River
Miles of impaired water body	15.9
Listed pollutants	Unknown
Impaired designated uses	Further verification of biological assessment required
TMDL goal	Temperature: PNV temperature TMDL (see addendum)
Further listing recommendations	Remove from §303(d)list for listed pollutants
Potential sources	Not applicable

A biological assessment was completed on the West Fork Weiser River per *Idaho Water Body Assessment Guidance* (Grafe et al. 2002). In 2002, Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program monitoring was conducted. The results from that monitoring indicate this stream segment is fully supporting its all of its beneficial uses. See the Addendum to the Weiser River Subbasin Assessment and TMDL for information about the Potential Natural Vegetation (PNV) temperature TMDL.

North Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir

Water Body	North Crane Creek Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir
Miles of impaired water body	24.7
Listed pollutants	Sediment, Temperature, Bacteria, Nutrients, and Flow
Impaired designated uses	Intermittent water body; no designated uses
TMDL goal	Temperature: PNV temperature TMDL (see addendum)
Further listing recommendations	Remove from §303(d) list for listed pollutants
Potential sources	Not applicable

North Crane Creek has been determined to be an intermittent water body. State of Idaho water quality standards and criteria for intermittent water bodies apply. North Crane Creek may be a source of total phosphorus and sediment to Crane Creek Reservoir. Further assessments and allocations for tributaries will be required to target critical periods and areas of concern for the reservoir. The final loading analysis completed in the subbasin assessment will assist in identifying these critical periods and areas of concern in North Crane Creek. Assessment of *E. coli* bacteria in 2003 showed that during a period of minimum discharge conditions, North Crane Creek is fully supporting primary and secondary contact recreation. See the Addendum to the Weiser River Subbasin Assessment and TMDL for information about the Potential Natural Vegetation (PNV) temperature TMDL.

South Crane Creek, Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir

Water Body	South Crane Creek Headwaters to Crane Creek Reservoir
Miles of impaired water body	9.2
Listed pollutants	Unknown
Impaired designated uses	Intermittent water body; no designated uses
TMDL goal	No TMDL required, intermittent water body
Further listing recommendations	Remove from §303(d) list as a intermittent water body
Potential sources	Not applicable

South Crane Creek has been determined to be an intermittent water body. State of Idaho water quality standards and criteria for intermittent water bodies apply. South Crane Creek may be a source of total phosphorus and sediment to Crane Creek Reservoir.

Further assessments and allocations for tributaries will be required to target critical periods and areas of concern for the reservoir. The final loading analysis completed in the subbasin assessment will assist in identifying these critical periods and areas of concern in North Crane Creek.

Crane Creek Reservoir

Water Body	Crane Creek Reservoir
Miles of impaired water body	Reservoir, 1,507 acres
Listed pollutants	Sediment and Nutrients
Impaired designated uses	Cold water aquatic life
TMDL/Allocation goal	Action on Crane Creek Reservoir will be delayed until 2007 to allow further study and assess the status and appropriateness of designated uses.
Further listing recommendations	No changes recommended
Potential sources	In-reservoir conditions

Action on Crane Creek Reservoir will be delayed until 2007 to allow further study and assess the status and appropriateness of designated uses.

Proposed Listing on Next Idaho §303(d) list

During the development of the Weiser River Watershed subbasin assessment, biological assessments and the analysis of available data have indicated that some water bodies are in full support of designated or existing beneficial uses. In other cases, it was determined that water bodies were not supporting designated or existing beneficial uses, but certain pollutants of concern were not the sources of impairment as presented in the 1998 §303(d) list. In addition, it was determined, in some cases, that additional pollutants of concern should be added as impairing a water body's designated or existing uses. Table C presents the recommendations for changes to future Idaho §303(d) lists.

Table C. §303(d) Delisting and Additional Listing Recommendations and Overview. Weiser River Watershed.

Water Body	Proposed Recommendation	Justification for Recommendation
Weiser River, (Galloway Dam to Snake River)	Remove nutrients and dissolved oxygen	Diel monitoring showed no exceedence of water quality criteria for dissolved oxygen; dissolved oxygen levels did not indicate nuisance aquatic growth
Weiser River, (Little Weiser River to Galloway Dam)	Remove bacteria and nutrients; add temperature	Dissolved oxygen levels did not indicate nuisance aquatic growth, water column temperature monitoring showed exceedances of water quality criteria for support of cold water aquatic life
Weiser River, (West Fork Weiser River to Little Weiser River)	Delist segment	<i>Water Body Assessment Guidance</i> indicated <i>Full Support</i>
Mann Creek, (Mann Creek Reservoir to Weiser River)	Delist segment	<i>Water Body Assessment Guidance</i> indicated <i>Full Support</i>
Cove Creek, (Headwaters to Weiser River)	Delist segment	Apply intermittent water body standards and criteria
Crane Creek, (Crane Creek Reservoir to Weiser River)	Remove nutrients	Dissolved oxygen levels did not indicate nuisance aquatic growth
Little Weiser River, (Indian Valley to Weiser River)	Remove nutrients; add bacteria	Dissolved oxygen levels did not indicate nuisance aquatic growth, bacteria monitoring showed exceedances of water quality criteria for support of contact recreation
Johnson Creek, (Headwaters to Weiser River)	Delist segment	<i>Water Body Assessment Guidance</i> indicated <i>Full Support</i>
West Fork Weiser River, (Headwaters to Weiser River)	Delist segment	<i>Water Body Assessment Guidance</i> indicated <i>Full Support</i>
North Crane Creek, (Headwaters to Crane Creek Res.)	Delist segment	Apply intermittent water body standards and criteria
South Crane Creek, (Headwaters to Crane Creek Res.)	Delist segment	Apply intermittent water body standards and criteria
Crane Creek Reservoir	Further study	Recommend limnology study to determine pollutant sources and use attainability analysis to determine appropriate uses

Timeframe for Meeting Water Quality Standards

The development of an implementation plan can be completed in a timely manner. However, implementation of best management practices may take years and is dependent on available resources, funding, and prioritization by land management agencies. A long-term monitoring plan will be developed to determine if the total maximum daily loads need to be refined and to assure that goals and targets of the total maximum daily loads are being achieved.

Some biological indicators may respond quickly to reduced sediment input and habitat improvement. Warm water intolerant species may take longer and may not re-establish until benefits from reduced solar radiation and increased ground water effectively cool the water.

Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy addresses the cursory development of an implementation plan for the Weiser River Watershed. State and federal agencies and the public will assist in implementing best management practices to achieve the targets and goals identified. The agencies that will be involved are the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Idaho Soil Conservation Commission, and the Department of Environmental Quality.

As with any implementation plan addressing nonpoint sources, an adaptive management approach will be a critical component of any implementation plan developed for the watershed. As more data are collected, future modifications to the load allocation may occur, which will include more accurate water body sediment loading information and a better determination of appropriate existing uses. Although their use is not anticipated, possible regulatory strategies are in place and can be applied through current regulatory authority.

Much of the implementation of best management practices will be dependent on the availability of funding and personnel resources. Current state and federal cost share programs will assist private landowners in addressing load allocations on private holdings. It is expected that the identified state and federal agencies will work closely with the Department of Environmental Quality during all phases of best management practices implementation and best management practices effectiveness evaluation.

Monitoring the target pollutants in the total maximum daily load needs to be conducted to determine

- 1) if the overall goal of achieving and maintaining compliance with state water quality standards is being met,
- 2) if the implemented best management practices are working as designed or if modification needs to occur,
- 3) if load allocations need to be adjusted, and

- 4) if best management practices are being implemented in a timely manner to address water quality concerns.

Identified Data Gaps

Through the Weiser River Watershed assessment process, two major data gaps were identified:

- The first data gap is the total suspended solids results and the comparison to the suspended sediment concentration. It is recognized the use of total suspended solids may underestimate the true amount of larger particles. This is especially true during the high discharge period of March through May, a critical period for sediment loading in the Weiser River Watershed.
- The second major data gap pertains to Crane Creek Reservoir. High turbidity levels and total phosphorus concentrations are believed to be associated with internal sources and not external sources. Further analysis of limnology conditions is required to determine if the sources of those parameters are anthropogenic.

Public Involvement

The Weiser River Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) was formed in 1998 to assist the Department of Environmental Quality in developing the *Weiser River Watershed Subbasin Assessment and Total Maximum Daily Load*. The Weiser River Watershed Advisory Group was briefed on ongoing and future monitoring that would occur to fill identified data gaps in the watershed.

Additional information was provided to the Weiser River Watershed Advisory Group as follows:

- In March 2003, the Weiser River Watershed Advisory Group was presented the basic approach to developing the *Weiser River Watershed Subbasin Assessment and Total Maximum Daily Loads*. This document provided the overall assessment process to be used in identifying impaired designated or existing uses, along with the approach to be used in determining if the listed pollutants of concern were impairing those uses.
- In July, August, October and November 2003, meetings were held to discuss the *Weiser River Watershed Subbasin Assessment and Total Maximum Daily Load* Technical Review Document (submitted to the Watershed Advisory Group on October 16, 2003). Alternative approaches to temperature TMDLs were discussed.

- With the WAG's approval, the document was sent out for public comment from August 9th through September 24th 2004. This version contained an approach to the temperature issue which mirrored the approach used in the Snake River Hells Canyon TMDL which had previously been approved by the EPA. However, upon further review of the document it was discovered that while this approach was satisfactory for use with the bi-state TMDL between Oregon and Idaho, that it could not be used within the State of Idaho.
- DEQ prepared a draft Potential Natural Vegetation Temperature TMDL for the Weiser River watershed. The draft was presented to the WAG on November 18, 2005.
- In the WAG meeting on February 15, 2006, the group voted unanimously to accept the Potential Natural Vegetation Temperature TMDL and send it out for public comment. They also reaffirmed their acceptance of the original document (with the temperature TMDL revisions).
- Copies of the draft assessment were made available for review at DEQ's Boise Regional Office; the public libraries in Weiser and Boise, Idaho; Washington County Courthouse in Weiser and the Adams County Courthouse in Council; and in PDF format on DEQ's Web site starting Monday, March 13th, 2006. Public comments on the proposed actions were accepted through 5 p.m., Friday, April 14th, 2006.
- The only comments received were from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The response to those comments is included in the Potential Natural Vegetation TMDL Addendum.
- In the WAG meeting on June 22, 2006, the group voted unanimously to accept the Potential Natural Vegetation Temperature TMDL as amended with the inclusion of comments received from the EPA. They also reaffirmed their acceptance of the original document (with the temperature TMDL revisions).